



Broadcast Interviews

Tips and Tricks for Success



What to Wear on Camera

- Dress conservatively and avoid bright colors or loud patterns. Instead, wear dark, solid colored outfits.
- Don't wear white. It casts unflattering light on the face and causes problems for TV cameras.
- Unbutton suit jackets when sitting, but button when standing.
- Mid-weight clothing will be the most comfortable choice. Studios can be cold at first, but quite warm after the lights are on.
- Don't wear large, shiny or noisy jewelry.
- If you have contact lenses, wear them instead of your glasses. If you wear glasses, non-reflective lenses are preferable. Don't wear light-sensitive glasses.
- Accept makeup if offered, as the host or reporter will likely have it on. Women might want to apply a matte finish to avoid a shiny face. Men should consider shaving beforehand.

Before the Interview

- Always arrive early to orient yourself with the studio and allow time for lighting and sound checks, if needed.
- A technician may clip a small "lavalier" microphone to you. Speak naturally and avoid brushing your hand or clothing against the microphone. Be sure the microphone is removed before walking away after the interview.
- If a technician asks you to test the sound level by speaking, speak at your normal level and say something innocuous (e.g., weather). Don't try to be funny, or say anything off-color.
- A 30 second to five minute "pre-interview" may precede the actual on-camera interview. Take this chance to understand the demeanor of the interviewer and mention what you'd like to discuss.

Body Language

- If seated, sit erect but not ramrod-straight, and slightly forward or toward the interviewer.
- If standing, stand with arms at sides or one hand in pocket. Planting one foot slightly in front of the other will help you avoid swaying.
- Keep gestures small and natural, and in front of you to avoid sudden body movement.
- Maintain a mildly pleasant expression at all times and make sure it matches your words; an expression that looks neutral off-camera looks unhappy or angry on-camera, so a pleasant face may feel unnaturally “smiley” at first.
- Lean forward slightly and modulate your voice to bring attention to key points.
- Avoid obvious signs of discomfort or nervousness, e.g., foot tapping, clenched fists, shifting back and forth.
- Don’t nod your head to indicate that you understand or are ready to answer the question, as this may convey agreement with the questioner’s premise when you don’t mean to do so. Remain neutral and become animated only when you begin to speak.
- Test yourself on the above points by reviewing your training tape with the sound off. Ask yourself: Do I look interested? Do I appear animated and excited?

During the Interview

- Remember to make your statements punchy and concise. Put your most important message up-front.
- Always talk to the interviewer or other guests, not the camera. Breaking eye contact by staring off into space or looking at the ground will make you appear “shifty.”
- If it is a “remote” interview — in which the reporter is at another location and asks you questions through an ear piece — look directly at the camera at all times.
- Don’t be distracted by the activity around you in the studio or by the camera crew.
- Wait until the reporter’s question is completely finished to begin your answer.
- Hold your “interview attitude” until the interview is completely over and the camera and your microphone are off.